

## **BCP SHADOW SCHOOLS FORUM**

**TUESDAY, 13TH NOVEMBER, 2018**

**Present:** Phil Keen (Corfe Hills School) – **Chairman**  
Patrick Earnshaw (Highcliffe School) – **Vice-Chairman**

Russell Arnold, The Quay School  
Mark Avoth, Bourne Academy  
Andy Baker, Poole Grammar School  
Karen Boynton, Highcliffe Primary School  
Kate Carter, TEACH Trust  
Jon Chapple, Twynham Primary School  
Geoff Cherrill, Winchelsea Special School  
Linda Duly, Cuddles Day Nursery  
Phillip Gavin, Christchurch Learning Centre  
Sue Johnson, Jack in the Box Nursery  
Bob Kennedy, St Michaels CE Primary School  
Jacqui Kitcher, Bournemouth and Poole College  
Marie Lane, St Edwards RC CE VA School  
Jeremy Payne, St James CE Primary School  
Sean Preston, Hamwic Multi-Academy Trust  
Dave Simpson, The Epiphany School  
David Todd, St Peter's School

**Also in Attendance:** Councillor Nicola Greene, Bournemouth Borough Council  
Councillor Mrs Patricia Jamieson, Christchurch Bourough Council  
Councillor Michael White, Borough of Poole

**Officers in attendance:** Jack Cutler, Planning and Statistics (BBC)  
Neil Goddard, Service Director - Community Learning & Commissioning (BBC)  
Marilyn Scofield-Marlowe, Business Support Officer and Clerk to the Forum (BoP)  
Vicky Wales, Head of Children, Young People and Learning (BoP)  
Nicola Webb, Assistant Chief Financial Officer (BoP and BBC)

### **12 Apologies for Absence**

David Newman - Director of Finance and Operations, Poole High School and Jason Holbrook – Headteacher, Avonbourne College provided substitutes for the meeting.

The Chair requested that all present confirmed that they were willing for their presence to be noted on the website as per GDPR requirements and signed a form provided to this effect.

The Chair thanked all officers involved for their hard work to produce reports under the tight timescale required.

**RESOLVED** by unanimous agreement that all present confirmed acceptance of their presence being noted on the relevant page of the BCP Shadow Authority website.

**13     Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

**14     Minutes**

**RESOLVED** by unanimous agreement that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 31 October 2018, having been previously circulated, be taken as read, signed and confirmed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**15     Early Years Funding Formula Consultation**

Amanda Gridley, Early Years Services Manager, Children Young People and Learning and Steve Ellis, Education Accountant, Financial Services, were welcomed to the table by the Chair, in order to provide an overview of the Early Years Funding Consultation papers provided prior to the meeting.

Key points raised:

- A minimum amount of 95% funding to be passed through to providers.
- A universal base rate for all types of provider, to be set by local authorities by 2019-20.
- The total value of supplements used must not be more than 10% of the total value of planned funding to be passed through to providers.
- Deprivation supplement is a mandatory supplement.
- A requirement for authorities to establish a special educational needs and disability inclusion fund.

The following principles were presented to Forum:

- (i) Minimise the amount retained centrally, maximising funding to providers.
- (ii) Using a supplement to support children with a background of deprivation, to narrow the gap between the most disadvantaged children and their peers, at a level that will improve their outcomes.
- (iii) Set a formula which allows providers to better forecast and business plan.
- (iv) SEND funding for every hour the child attends a setting at a level to support improvements in their outcomes.

Impact of the proposals was queried. It was noted that Child Minders are the most impacted when looking at lowered levels of funding, however, not all providers will see a reduction in funding.

Overall, the funding proposal would broadly see:

- Reductions in Bournemouth of 2.5%, although an increase in SEND inclusion funding.
- Increases in Christchurch of 2%
- Increases in Poole of 0.6%

Questions were raised by Forum members around the amount of retention requested. It was confirmed that the Local Authority can retain up to 5% of funding. The total retained for the Local Authority, including the proposed amount of 1% for transfer to the High Needs Block (HNB), totals 1.9% of the budget. This is lower than the amount most Local Authorities retain; for example, Dorset County Council for Christchurch providers currently retains 5%.

Concerns were raised that Early Years Providers cannot continue at the level of funding proposed; the only option for continued business is to raise the fees of those parents that pay for services amounting to an increase in 4-5%. It was considered that this may affect parents' ability to access the service.

It was stated that Early Years Providers had expected a transfer of 0.5% to the High Needs Block; the increase to 1% was stated to not be supported by Providers.

The cost of providing HNB funding to Early Years Providers was requested. It was explained that there has been an increase in funded provision for SEND children from 15 hours per week to 30 hours per week. There has also been a growth in the number of EHCPs in Early Years. Early Years has access to the Portage service. The total cost of SEND provision for Early Years was stated to be £735,000, before the cost of EHCPs is applied, although a proportion of this would be claimed from Health. The transfer to the HNB amounts to £200,000.

It was felt that a further question needed to be included in the consultation regarding the HNB transfer.

The Forum was asked to approve:

1. The proposed central retention of £100,000 representing 1.4% from the 3 and 4 year old allocation of funding and £81,000 (4%) from the 2 year old allocation.

The Forum was requested to endorse:

1. The principles outlined in the draft consultation document.
2. The proposals set out in the consultation paper.

**RESOLVED that:**

- (i) Approval given for the proposal for a central retention budget of £181,000; 12 in favour, 3 abstentions and 2 against.
- (ii) Endorsement provided for the principles outlined in the draft consultation document; 16 in favour and 1 abstention.
- (iii) The consultation document was considered fit for purpose with the addition of 1 question regarding the HNB transfer; 16 in favour and 1 abstention.

**16     Mainstream Schools Funding Formula Consultation**

Jack Cutler presented the papers in detail relating to the Mainstream Schools Funding Formula Consultation.

This information was presented in order for the Forum to take a decision whether to:

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- (i) Support the recommendations of the formula subgroup in establishing the formula changes required to achieve a 1.5% transfer, the scaling of this option for smaller transfers, and the approach illustrated to achieve transfers above 1.5%.
- (ii) Agree whether these recommendations should form the basis of the LA formula consultation with schools.
- (iii) Agree/ disagree disapplication requests to the DfE could be submitted in preparation for decision-making after the consultation process was complete.

The Mainstream Formula Sub-Group of 6 Schools Forum members met on 12 November 2018 to look at the principles for the formula. It was noted that the members were a good cross-section of schools by phase and BCP area. The Sub-Group did not consider the amount of transfer to the HNB only the NFF adjustment should one be agreed. 2 options were considered:

- a. Add to schools 2018/19 funding incrementally.
- b. Take away from 2019-20 National Funding Formula (NFF) incrementally.

The Sub-Group selected option b.

In addition, the Sub-Group considered principles on which any funding should be released from NFF.

- a. Certain groups of schools contribute only/ disproportionately; for example those schools that would be due to receive significant increases to funding under NFF.
- b. All schools share the transfer as equitably as possible.

The Sub-Group selected option b.

The Forum discussed the merits of taking into account school balances when determining the share of the transfer. It was felt that this was not a fair determination as this could not take into account the reasons for any balance held by individual schools, or the differences in accounting date of this information between maintained schools and academies.

The impact on individual schools was discussed.

- Generally, the NFF continues to provide the greatest level of increase for those schools with the lowest level of funding per pupil. This is because:
  - Minimum per pupil funding levels (MPPFLs) introduced in 2018-19 have been raised for 2019-20.
  - Poole did not implement the 2018-19 levels in full this year
  - Regulations provide that these increases cannot be capped.
- Schools on formula allocations have increases capped at 3%.
- Schools with historic funding greater than the NFF provides, will see:
  - Maximum 1% increase (if the floor factor is introduced)
  - Funding reductions (if the floor factor is not introduced) depending where the level of the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) is set.
- Any funding increases under the NFF reduces as the level of transfer increases.

It was requested that further data showing impact by school groupings (as per above bullets) to be provided in the Consultation Paper.

**ACTION: The Consultation Paper is to include funding impact for schools grouped by those at the cap, floor, MPPFL and on formula for each transfer option.**

The Forum determined that decisions would be made following discussion of the HNB paper.

**17     High Needs Block**

Vicky Wales presented the High Needs Block report.

The HNB Task and Finish Groups in Poole and Bournemouth have been brought together, along with representation from Christchurch, as per the request at the previous meeting. The new combined group is titled the BCP HNB Financial Strategy Group.

Members of the new Group have been identified and the first meeting is to be held on 15 November 2018. Vicky Wales and Dave Simpson have worked together to create a Terms of Reference and Forward Plan for the Group. There are 3 meetings scheduled prior to the December meeting of the Shadow Schools Forum.

It was acknowledged that the timescales given were tight; the Group has a lot of very challenging work to do before the Forum meeting in December with some potentially unpalatable decisions to be made. It was considered that methods considered deliverable in reducing spend have already been taken into account in calculating the £5.7 million shortfall.

Outreach services across Bournemouth and Poole were discussed; data is being collated to determine the way forward.

It was raised that there was no Early Years representative in the HNB Financial Strategy Group. A volunteer was requested.

**ACTION: The Clerk will provide the dates for the BCP HNB Financial Strategy Group to the early years representatives.**

It was considered that there was a danger that cuts in budgets had the potential to increase spend, not reduce it; the success of schemes may not be able to be measured in terms of lower spend, but rather in the reduction in of increases in costs.

The timescale for the decision about the size of the transfer to the HNB was discussed. A transfer of larger than 0.5% needs to be lodged with the DfE by the 30 November 2018; this does not have to specify the amount of the transfer. The decision regarding the amount of transfer needs to be completed at the December meeting of Forum.

On completion of the discussion regarding the HNB funding, Forum considered the recommendations of the Mainstream Formula Sub-Group:

- (i) Support the recommendations of the formula subgroup in establishing the formula changes required to achieve a 1.5% transfer, the scaling of this option for smaller transfers, and the approach illustrated to achieve transfers above 1.5% and agree whether these recommendations should form the basis of the LA formula consultation with schools.

- (ii) Agree/ disagree disapplication requests can be submitted to the DfE in preparation for decision-making will be in December.

**RESOLVED by unanimous agreement that:**

- (i) The consultation is to include figures for a transfer to the HNB of 0.5%, 1.0%, 1.5% and 3.0%; the consultation is to make clear that the amount being transferred has not as yet been decided.
- (ii) It should be lodged with the DfE by 30 November 2018 that a transfer of greater than 0.5% may be requested. A disapplication request to be made to vary the MFG calculation for all all-through schools adding primary year groups.

Previous discussions considered setting a variable MFG such that for any school whose funding is protected at >20% through MFG would have MFG set at -1.5% and no floor, regardless of the MFG level set in the formula. This option did not have the support of the formula working group and so it is proposed not to submit a disapplication request for this.

**18 Forward Plan**

The Chair advised uncertainty in the Forward Plan, due to the work of the BCP HNB Financial Strategy Group.

**19 Any Other Business**

It was acknowledged that collectively schools and the 3 Local Authorities have come together to complete a lot of work to resolve these issues in a very short of period of time.

The Early Years Reference Group are meeting on 17 December 2018.

It was discussed that it would be beneficial if the meeting of Forum in December was held later in the month, and earlier in the day.

**ACTION: The Clerk is to move the December meeting of Shadow Schools Forum later in the month and earlier in the day.**

The Chair thanked all members for their time and contribution.

**Appended:**

Following the meeting, the revised date confirmed as: Friday 14 December 2018 at 8.00am.

**Duration of the meeting:** 12.30 - 2.40 pm

**Chairman at the meeting on  
Tuesday, 13 November 2018**